

Rule 29. Disability and disqualification of a judge or change of venue.

(a) If, by reason of death, sickness, or other disability, the judge before whom a trial has begun is unable to continue with the trial, any other judge of that court or any judge assigned by the presiding officer of the Judicial Council, upon certifying that the judge is familiar with the record of the trial, may, unless otherwise disqualified, proceed with and finish the trial, but if the assigned judge is satisfied that neither he nor another substitute judge can proceed with the trial, the judge may, in his discretion, grant a new trial.

(b) If, by reason of death, sickness, or other disability, the judge before whom a defendant has been tried is unable to perform the duties required of the court after a verdict of guilty, any other judge of that court or any judge assigned by the presiding officer of the Judicial Council may perform those duties.

(c)(1)(A) A party to any action or the party's attorney may file a motion to disqualify a judge. The motion shall be accompanied by a certificate that the motion is filed in good faith and shall be supported by an affidavit stating facts sufficient to show bias or prejudice, or conflict of interest.

(c)(1)(B) The motion shall be filed after commencement of the action, but not later than 20 days after the last of the following:

(c)(1)(B)(i) assignment of the action or hearing to the judge;

(c)(1)(B)(ii) appearance of the party or the party's attorney; or

(c)(1)(B)(iii) the date on which the moving party learns or with the exercise of reasonable diligence should have learned of the grounds upon which the motion is based.

If the last event occurs fewer than 20 days prior to a hearing, the motion shall be filed as soon as practicable.

(c)(1)(C) Signing the motion or affidavit constitutes a certificate under Rule 11, Utah Rules of Civil Procedure and subjects the party or attorney to the procedures and sanctions of Rule 11. No party may file more than one motion to disqualify in an action.

(c)(1)(D) The other parties to the action may not file an opposition to the motion and if any response is filed it will not be considered. The moving party need not file a Request to Submit for Decision under rule 12. The motion will be submitted for decision upon filing.

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Draft: March 26, 2012

(c)(2) The judge against whom the motion and affidavit are directed shall, without further hearing, enter an order granting the motion or certifying the motion and affidavit to a reviewing judge. The judge shall take no further action in the case until the motion is decided. If the judge grants the motion, the order shall direct the presiding judge of the court or, if the court has no presiding judge, the presiding officer of the Judicial Council to assign another judge to the action or hearing. Assignment in justice court cases shall be in accordance with Utah Code Ann. §78-5-138. The presiding judge of the court, any judge of the district, any judge of a court of like jurisdiction, or the presiding officer of the Judicial Council may serve as the reviewing judge.

(c)(3)(A) If the reviewing judge finds that the motion and affidavit are timely filed, filed in good faith and legally sufficient, the reviewing judge shall assign another judge to the action or hearing or request the presiding judge or the presiding officer of the Judicial Council to do so. Assignment in justice court cases shall be in accordance with Utah Code Ann. §78-5-138.

(c)(3)(B) In determining issues of fact or of law, the reviewing judge may consider any part of the record of the action and may request of the judge who is the subject of the motion and affidavit an affidavit responsive to questions posed by the reviewing judge.

(c)(3)(C) The reviewing judge may deny a motion not filed in a timely manner.

(d)(1) If the prosecution or a defendant in a criminal action believes that a fair and impartial trial cannot be had in the jurisdiction where the action is pending, either may, by motion, supported by an affidavit setting forth facts, ask to have the trial of the case transferred to another jurisdiction.

(d)(2) If the court is satisfied that the representations made in the affidavit are true and justify transfer of the case, the court shall enter an order for the removal of the case to the court of another jurisdiction free from the objection and all records pertaining to the case shall be transferred forthwith to the court in the other county. If the court is not satisfied that the representations so made justify transfer of the case, the court shall either enter an order denying the transfer or order a formal hearing in court to resolve the matter and receive further evidence with respect to the alleged prejudice.

(e) When a change of judge or place of trial is ordered all documents of record concerning the case shall be transferred without delay to the judge who shall hear the case.

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